Using the Bible

Ps. 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
and a light unto my path.

2 Tim. 3:16 All ~~scripture is given by inspiration of God,~~
~~and is profitable for doctrine~~

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for amendment, and for moral discipline, to make the man of God proficient and equip him for good work of every kind."

Intro. The Bible is a guide book for right and full living, primarily a book to live by.

It makes us acquainted with God and leads us into personal relationship with Him.
It directs us in our daily living one with another, and adequately provides the foundation of a godly character.

We could say much about the Bible —
an interesting collection of literature
Its history, its origin & development.
What the world's greatest men have thot about the Bible.

But our concern this a.m. has to do with our using the Bible for the greatest good we can get out of it, and for the greatest service it enables us to render to our fellow men.

2/ I. First let us distinguish between the study of the Bible & the use of the Bible.

1. Mere study of the Bible is superficial apart from its use.

You can memorize it, analyze it, you can know all about it from Genesis to Revelation, but if you don't use it according to its great purpose, it will do you very little good, not any more than the study of any other book!

You are invited to a Thanksgiving dinner & you're hungry, but you are a scholar. You believe in analyzing foods & knowing their chemical reactions in the body. You ∴ insist that the food set on the table be first analyzed before you consent to eat it. You are a connoisseur of silverware & you must first know all about the implements on the table. So likewise, the glassware must be investigated; & the table linen & the furniture & so to a degree of absurdity it would be possible for one to refuse to eat until he knew all about the dinner & its service. That would be a superficial exercise of intelligence. Common sense says — Sit down and eat!

The same with the Bible. The first thing & the constant thing to do with it is to use it. And all the study of the Bible should be for the purpose of enabling you to use it to better advantage.

~~Zeramlsa's violin~~.

2. Scholarship has its place.

a — Their findings often disturb the faith of many, but if we are searching for a religion to live by & hold on to the scriptures for the use we can put them to, the various theories & interpretations offered from the scholars need not disturb us any.

3/F 2 b. ~~The drifting sp ladder upon an island inhabited by uncivilized people — rungs — sides. A ship-wrecked sailor appeared took the ladder & placed it against a tree, climbed up, picked some fruit & ate.~~

Use the Bible & don't argue about it:

c — Example of the 2 accounts of creation in Genesis — are they one acct or 2 separate stories? the important thing is the assertion ~~that~~ of the reality of God at the heart of all creation.

d — the 6th & 40th chapter of Isaiah — written by 2 different men — what of it — both declare that the Lord God almighty is with men.

e — Again, suppose that the scholars do tell us that ~~John~~ Jesus never said that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth in the exact words of the 4th gospel — ~~what of it~~? shall we conclude that the spirit of truth is not holy — or, finding it self-evident & entirely in keeping with the spirit & understanding of Jesus, shall we not in the spirit of truth use it as a vital part of our religion to live by?

II. The Bible is not to be used superstitiously. To make it a fetish or a crystal ball ~~to~~ is worse than merely study the Bible without using it.

A ludicrous case of a woman who claimed the Bible told her exactly what to do in every little detail of life — She didn't know whether to turn a frayed-out skirt or dye it. So she opened her Bible & read — "Turn ye, o turn ye, for why will ye die?"

She got what she wanted - but missed the great central teaching of the Bible - God's challenge to sinful men to turn from their evil ways before it is too late, "So saith the Lord"

Beware of reading into the Bible what is not there.

III. The Scriptures are writings by the friends of God concerning the experiences of those who knew God most intimately. and who are best qualified to tell us about God & his righteousness.

When the Pres. of U.S. interviews reporters he requests them not to use quotation marks. the various accts differ in minor details but the essential mind of the Pres. is made known.

→ The same way with these various accts of the friends of God - however they may differ in detail, or even at times concerning some essential matter, their accts collectively reveal to us the true mind & heart of God.

The Bible is to be interpreted in the spirit of truth.

IV. The Bible is a book to live

When we say that the Bible is a book to live by, do we mean that we are to live by everything that is in it?

We go to the O.T. & find that the people of God are instructed to slay their enemies. Are we therefore to conclude that war is a holy thing & insist on its maintenance?

We hear Jesus say, Give to him that asketh - ∴ should we give to an imposter ~~on a city street~~ when we know in truth that this is an unwise thing to do?

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